

efflorescence, we crossed the river again and also a dry bed beyond it and reached a small patch of recently opened cultivation known as Bāchang-aghzi. It receives irrigation from a small stream, which flows out of an absolutely barren hill chain about a mile farther north. The extreme end of the steep conglomerate spur that flanks its outlet on the west, carries remains which undoubtedly go back to Buddhist times. The site is known as *Duldul-ökür*.<sup>8a</sup> On the narrow crest of a small precipitous ridge, rising to a height of about a hundred feet immediately above the mouth of the defile, there survives the base of a ruined Stūpa, measuring about fourteen feet square and standing to a height of over seven feet. It is built of sun-dried bricks, measuring 15 × 12 × 3 inches. Owing to the extreme steepness of the cliffs on all sides, access to the top of the ridge is very difficult, and debris from whatever structure may have occupied it has long since been washed down. But fragments of hard coloured stucco could be picked up immediately below the western face of the Stūpa base, and an interesting relic was recovered among the rubble at the foot of a small gully adjoining this ridge on the north. It is the fragment, about eight inches high, of a wooden vesica and halo finely carved in relievo, which undoubtedly once served as the backing of a Buddhist image.<sup>9</sup> The workmanship seems to point to T'ang times.

Climbing up this steep gully, I noticed thin layers of ancient refuse similar to those found on the slopes below the fort of Mazār-tāgh,<sup>10</sup> and at an elevation of about fifty feet above the bottom of the gorge I came upon the remains of a massive wall about four feet thick and built of sun-dried bricks. It was traceable on either side of the gorge and evidently intended to close access to it. The top of a narrow ridge, which I reached with difficulty, retained indications of ancient occupation in the shape of a plentiful deposit of refuse. Neither time nor labour was available for systematic clearing, and superficial scraping revealed only reed straw, remnants of fuel, portions of corded hemp shoes, &c. A low mound on a small northern projection of the ridge may perhaps mark the base of a completely ruined Stūpa, judging from the fragment of a wooden beam with mouldings found embedded in the brick debris. I need only mention further a curious semicircular brick wall decayed almost to the ground, which encloses a space about 36 feet long from north to south and 26 feet across, immediately below an almost vertical cliff on the west side of the outlet. Its purpose remains obscure; but it may well account by its shape for the local designation *Duldul-ökür*, derived from Persian *Duldul-ākḥur*, 'the manger of Duldul', this being the name of Rustam's horse famous in popular legend.<sup>11</sup> However this may be, there can be little doubt that these scanty ruins mark the position of a small Buddhist sanctuary established at a *su-bāshi*. The defile from which the stream descends was said to be occasionally followed as a branch of the route which connects Kāshgar with Uch-Turfān, and is known as Mutul-aghzi.

Skirting the foot of the hills eastwards for about four and a half miles farther, over bare gravel and salt-encrusted alluvium, we reached the second site known as *Kalmak-shahri*. It is marked by the remains of a large circumvallation in stamped clay, originally quadrangular in shape but with dimensions no longer determinable; for only badly eroded portions of the west and north faces could be traced, the rest having apparently been washed away by floods from the Mutul-aghzi defile. Small as the stream of the latter is now, rain in the mountains occasionally causes

Remains of former occupation.

Site of *Kalmak-shahri*.

<sup>8a</sup> For the name, see below.

<sup>9</sup> *Duldul-okur. 01. Fr. of carved wooden vesica*; elliptical when complete, with pointed extension at top. R. portion only preserved; with part of top. Border of vesica rayed with simple V-cuts at right angles to edge; and same border carried up to point. Field of vesica orn. with long V-channelled petals radiating from centre, but interrupted at upper end by part of circular halo with plain

border and similar radiating petals within. Good work; good condition. H. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " , gr. width 2" , thickness  $\frac{5}{8}$ ". Pl. IX.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *Serindia*, iii. p. 1287.

<sup>11</sup> The same local name derived from the epic legend of Īrān is also met with elsewhere, in widely distant places, e. g. as the designation of temple ruins at the Kum-tura site of Kuchā and of an ancient circumvallation, south of Hauzdār in Sīstān.